

the **STREETWISE INSIDER**

Issue Two

November 2005

Price: As if no demolition?

Under the heading "we'll give you the facts". MBC's latest glossy (issue 4, Nov) accuses The **INSIDER** of producing "inaccurate and misleading material".

On the contrary the **INSIDER** provides the TRUTH behind what passes for 'FACT' with this current council leadership, plus TRUTHS they do not want us to know.

TRUTH: The latest *New Vision* glossy failed to inform residents that regeneration plans have been delayed. The proposals should have been with the Government at the end of October. Instead, they have been returned with a requirement to 'amend and refine the text and proposals' for submission in January 2006. In other words the 'New Vision' as it stands is **UNACCEPTABLE**.

The **INSIDER** can reveal that this amounts to a major set back for MBC, who want us to believe that the mass demolition of Gresham and the Gems is 'a done deal'. IT ISN'T, and as long as the vast majority of us continue to oppose it, IT NEVER WILL BE.

TRUTH: 98% of residents in a poll observed by all three elected Ward Councilors voted against MBC's existing proposals. See results at:

www.homeregeneration.com

After all of their subsequent efforts to present a different story MBC's own figures ('Drop in questionnaire analysis – May 05') could only muster 33% in favour of their existing proposals (the preferred option 4), and this from a sample area containing 11,600 homes.

The **INSIDER** can reveal that the Mori Poll was a desperate attempt by MBC to get around this embarrassing statistic. Once again THEY FAILED MISERABLY.

STREETWISE INSIDER does not seek to discredit Mori, we simply DISAGREE WITH MBC's INTERPRETATION of Mori's findings.

Unquestionably **MORI** is one of the biggest market research companies in the land, but the undisclosed **TRUTH** is that it still only sampled **105** Gresham households. That is a mere **17%** of the **sample size**. Again these are their own figures not ours.

The **INSIDER** asked MBC how many of these 105 households were actually on the demolition hit list? You won't be surprised to know that this was yet another FACT MBC was unwilling to disclose.

Residents and home owners here are still waiting for the Council to reply to 27 questions asked at full council meeting in September. WE ASKED FOR FACTS AND GOT NOTHING. The November issue of the *New Vision* glossy was a perfect opportunity to answer our question, yet instead they found it more important to advertise a Quiz Night.

What we have all got is SPIN and more SPIN. Trotted out again in the glossy we find, "70% agreed with demolition provided the people affected were treated properly"

TRUTH: MORI asked do you strongly agree, agree or disagree with the following statement:

'I would support demolition of some terraced housing if those living there are offered similar or better homes and are fully compensated'.

TRUTH: the word **SOME** should not be taken to mean that interviewees were for the mass demolition of 1500 homes!

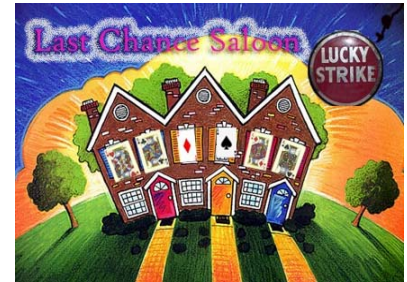
STREETWISE INSIDER is not opposed to regeneration and even **SOME** demolition if the properties in question can be shown to be derelict or dangerous. What we object to is the wanton destruction of 1500 homes the vast majority of which are perfectly sound, occupied, and for the most part has been lovingly cared for by their owners who have spent £1,000's on them.

Mass demolition for what purpose? No one outside of council chambers and 'Northern Housing' (who were clearly not that impressed) has seen a plan.

The **INSIDER** asks DO YOU REALLY TRUST A COUNCIL WHICH WILL NOT TELL 1500 FAMILIES – 4000+ PEOPLE, WHY THEY WANT TO KNOCK DOWN THEIR HOMES, AND WHAT THEY WILL BE REPLACED WITH.

Readers will no doubt recall one of MBC's earlier 'FACTS' (spread to justify mass demolition) namely, 'housing market failure'.

TRUTH: Royal Bank of Scotland in a recent survey found **TS1 (Gresham and the Gems)** to be a property **HOT SPOT**. (**Evening Gazette September 5 – Hot Houses**). "The area is also placed second in the UK in a study of areas with the **most potential for first-time buyers**."



The RBS survey aims to identify the most promising property hotspots in the region and the country. It says **TS1** is "an ideal place for today's first time buyers to invest". Our first issue (Oct) informed readers of what the councils own experts said about the towns terraced housing.

STREETWISE INSIDER has seen the findings of the consultants and they conclude that Gresham IS NOT the worst terraced housing in the town. Yet MBC decided to target Gresham for demolition!

The **INSIDER** thinks this is simply a **LAND GRAB**. We have it and they want it, and they will use any spin to justify taking it from us!

MBC has nothing to say about this either, but then how could they dispute the findings of a company they gave £300,000 to. Best just keep quiet about it.

The first **INSIDER** also quoted The Telegraph's exposé of **MBC's** record of paying 'market value' to home owners of St Hilda's – offers of £21,000 for homes independently valued at £55,000. We also suggested that MBC intends to ultimately demolish the Bow Street triangle and beyond.

Again the *New Vision* glossy has nothing to say. No denials, nothing. Perhaps the next 'New Vision' glossy will actually provide us with some factual information, but don't hold your breath. Best stick with the **STREETWISE INSIDER**.

